

frightened away from home in that way. It would be a great pity to have their pleasant houses with all their fine books, pictures, articles, or inter &c destroyed by fire, wouldn't it? — I send you a letter from the Correspondent of the West Chronicle, giving an account of our operations on the other side of the Rapidan.

How correct it is, I cannot say, further than that much of the blame of the failure is cast upon French who is said to have been drunk. The paragraph next to the ~~last~~ <sup>last</sup> is wrong. Sedgwick was in command of our force on the night, but when our cannon opened there was complete silence along the rest of the line. We were then very quiet until our guns had ceased, then for some hours after when the 82 pdrs of the Reserve Artillery opened but they did not fire many shots.

It is very hard to get a truthful account of military operations. The actors in them have few opportunities for saying anything but what they do themselves, ~~the~~ Correspondents have an opportunity of seeing more, but they generally write as if they knew very little & seldom give an intelligible account of what they undertake to narrate. — We have settled down into winter quarters & shall have nothing exciting until the commencement of the Spring campaign. Much love from Thine D.R.B.

Camp near Bealton Station

Dec. 15. 1863.

My Dear Wife:

I wrote you a long letter on Sunday and rec'd yours of the 8th on the same evening. No letter came last night, so I am writing one myself to see whether that will bring me another to-night.

I wrote to Robert yesterday, so my letter will be ready for him when he arrives. I do not think he will come out to see me. When in Washington he appears to be very busy, — has all sorts of engagements with a good many kinds of people, — and is always complaining of being away from home & fixing a time to leave. It will be the same on this occasion I presume. He will think he has no time to come to see me until he gets anxious to go home, for which he



I think paper was omitted - but - such what - the has certainly proved him self very true to - paper family an in the desert. Name

will suddenly start some day, writing to me how very sorry he is that his engagements were such that he couldn't possibly visit me. I can't say how far his desire to see how soldiers live in camp, would carry him, but more desire to see me wouldn't put him to much trouble.

This is the fourth letter I have written you since I scribbled that pencil note. They don't seem to reach you as soon as they should. The first after the note was dated the 7<sup>th</sup>, & the second, the 8<sup>th</sup>. I was so situated for several days after sending the note that I could not write. Our mail now leaves in the afternoon or evening so that my letters will probably reach you a day earlier than formerly.

I saw Capt Lay yesterday and asked him about the direction to his

wife. There are two or three mistakes - the Capt's name is R. G. and Madames is C. K. Mr Kimball's is E. H. (not H. G. as you had it) 55 Liberty St is right. Mrs. L. is staying with Mrs. Morton at present; about the last of the month she expects to visit Warrington, to remain a couple of months.

It is suspected that Mr Kimball's <sup>burn</sup> ~~house~~ was burned by a man who had charge of his oyster-pond & whom he discharged after detecting him in dishonesty. The man is now in jail, but it is doubtful whether a case can be made out against him. Mr. K's loss was a pretty severe one for him, I suspect. Besides the women-folk must be very much terrified at the prospect of having the house burned down over their heads any night. Mrs. L. & her sister are both at Mrs. Morton's, but I suppose the old lady has too much pluck to be